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EXAMINER

BASOM, BLAINE T

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2173

DATE MAILED: 01/15/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/607,374

Applicant(s)

CHAVEZ ET AL.

Examiner

Blaine Basom

Art Unit

2173

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-39 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 27-37 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26, 38 and 39 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 30 June 2000 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 4-7.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

Art Unit: 2173

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 1-26, and 38-39, drawn to providing help information, classified in class 345, subclasses 712 and 749.
- II. Claims 27-37, drawn to updating existing help information in a database, classified in class 707, subclass 200.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions I and II are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention II has separate utility such as for updating or modifying an existing help service system. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, and because the search required for Group I is not required for Group II, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Art Unit: 2173

During a telephone conversation with Applicants' Attorney, Y. Kurt Chang, on December 5, 2002 a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention drawn to providing help information, claims 1-26, and 38-39. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims 27-37 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143).

Claim Objections

Claims 2, 5, 18, 22, and 24 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claims, or amend the claims to place the claims in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claims in independent form. Particularly, claims 2, 5, 18, 22, and 24 each recite a computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing a method previously described in the claim on which it depends. This does not further limit the subject matter of the claims to which claims 2, 5, 18, 22, or 24 depend.

Art Unit: 2173

Claims 6 and 8 are objected to for the use of “said each help topic” since there is no “each help topic” explicitly stated in claim 1, on which both claims 6 and 8 depend. In this case, for example, “each said help topic” would be more appropriate instead.

Drawings

The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they include the following reference signs not mentioned in the description: reference number 88, in figure 2; reference number 112, in figure 3; and reference number 130, in figure 6. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 23-26 and 38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide. In general, NetHelp is a platform used to build and provide online help systems. As disclosed by the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide, these online help systems pertain to applications residing on computer systems where Netscape Navigator is present (see the section entitled “Welcome to NetHelp” on page 1). Moreover, it is known that

Art Unit: 2173

applications generally involve a plurality of components of a computer system, such as the memory and input devices. For example, installation of an application involves the memory of the computer system, and various input commands to the application similarly involve an input component, like a mouse or keyboard. Therefore, it is interpreted that the help information provided by the online help system for an application includes help information relating to a plurality of components of the computer system on which the application is executed.

Additionally, it is interpreted that the online help system is provided by a computer system having a graphical user interface including a display and a user interface selection device, as is common in the art.

Regarding claim 23, the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide discloses that the help information is divided into topics, which are organized into subsections, i.e. help categories (see the section entitled "Planning Your NetHelp System" beginning on page 4). These subsections are displayed in a "Locator pane" within a window provided via the online help system. Therefore, the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide teaches displaying, in a user interface area, help categories on a taxonomy structure categorizing a plurality of help topics, which as described above, pertain to a plurality of components of the computer system. Additionally, the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide discloses that upon receiving a selection of a subsection, displaying in the user interface area help topics in the taxonomy structure under the selected help subsection (see the section entitled "Subsections" on page 5). And finally, if one of these help topics are selected, the help contents associated with the selected help topic are displayed (see the section entitled "How the Table of Contents Works" on page 12).

Art Unit: 2173

Referring to claim 24, the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide is used to create web pages which provide online help, as is described above. The provision of such web pages is implemented through a client/server environment via computers. Therefore, it is interpreted that the method taught by the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide is implemented with a computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method of claim 24.

As per claims 25 and 26, the online help systems taught by the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide include an index which is displayed to the user. This index contains a "Look for:" field, which in an interface element that prompts for a selection for performing a keyword search for help topics. And additionally, the online help systems taught by the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide include an "Index button," which is a user interface element for prompting a selection for viewing the help topics by index (see the section entitled "How the Index Works," starting on page 13).

Regarding claim 38, the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide teaches a method of accessing help contents from an application on a computer system. Particularly, the online help systems taught by the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide include links, which identify the namespace of help information (see the section entitled "Creating Links Within Your NetHelp System" beginning on page 9). Moreover, the links identify the online help system manufacturer, i.e. help service. It is interpreted that the online help systems are viewed with a browser application executing on a computer and that these links are selected to view help information associated with the link. Therefore, selecting a help topic link is considered equivalent to requesting, by the browser application, retrieval of help contents at a location indicated by a link, the link including a first

Art Unit: 2173

portion identifying a namespace of help contents registered with a help service of the computer system.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 39 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide, which is described above, and also U.S. Patent No. 5,825,356, which is attributed to Habib et al. As shown above, the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide teaches a method, like that of claim 38, for accessing help contents from an application on a computer system. However, the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide does not disclose that the help contents include an active component, as is recited in claim 39.

Like the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide and Bernardo et al., Habib et al. presents a method for providing help information to a user, wherein this help information is organized into various topics and is presented on the user's computer (see column 3, lines 44-51). Habib et al. additionally discloses that the presentation of help information includes displaying a "do-it-all" button, which when selected, causes the computer to execute an active component in order to complete a task regarding a selected help topic (see column 1, lines 57-60). Thus, as recited in

Art Unit: 2173

claim 11, Habib et al. teaches that the help content of a selected help topic includes an active component, which may be executed when the help content is displayed.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide and Habib et al. before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the online help systems taught by the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide such that they include buttons with similar functionality to the "do-it-all" buttons described above and recited by Habib et al. It would have been advantageous to one of ordinary skill to utilize such a combination because, as expressed by Habib et al., "do-it-all" buttons provide a faster means of fixing a problem than that of manually fixing the problem (see column 4, lines 15-19).

Claims 1-10, and 17-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide, and also, U.S. Patent No. 6,185,587, which is attributed to Bernardo et al. As described above, NetHelp is a platform used to build and provide online help systems. These online help systems pertain to applications residing on computer systems where Netscape Navigator is present (see the section entitled "Welcome to NetHelp" on page 1). Moreover, the help information provided by the online help system includes help information relating to a plurality of components of the computer system on which the application is executed, as described above.

Regarding claim 1, the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide discloses that the help systems built through the NetHelp platform involve a user interface which includes a Locator Pane. This Locator Pane is used to display a table of contents for the help system, wherein a plurality of help topics are presented to the user (see the section entitled "How the Table of Contents Works"

Art Unit: 2173

on page 12). As explained above, it is interpreted that this plurality of help topics pertains to a plurality of components of a computer system. Moreover, this presentation of help topics, i.e. the content and structure of the table of contents, is based on data in the form of computer code (see the section entitled “How the Table of Contents Works” on page 12 and the sections entitled “Coding a Subsection for the Table of Contents” and “Coding a Topic for the Table of Contents,” both on page 13). By selecting a topic in the locator pane, a user is presented information for that topic in a separate pane (see the “Topic” bullet in the section entitled “How the Table of Contents Works” on page 12). It is therefore interpreted that the idea of detecting a selection of a help topic through the user interface, retrieving help contents for that selected help topic, and then displaying the retrieved help contents is inherent in the teachings of the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide. However, the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide does not expressly teach the idea that the plurality of help topics is accessed via a help database, as is recited in claim 1.

Like the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide, the U.S. Patent of Bernardo et al. presents a method for providing online help. Additionally both Bernardo et al. and the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide disclose that web pages, which provide for the online help, include content specified using hypertext markup language (HTML) (see column 1, lines 40-46 of Bernardo et al. and the section entitled “Authoring for NetHelp” on page 1 of the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide). Regarding claim 1, Bernardo et al. discloses that such HTML content may be stored in an HTML database (see column 6, lines 12-18). The advantages of databases are well known the art. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide and Bernardo et al. before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the online help systems taught by the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring

Art Unit: 2173

Guide such that the web page content, i.e. help topics, is accessed via a database as taught by Bernardo et al. It would have been advantageous to one of ordinary skill to utilize such a combination because databases provide for a standard and efficient means for storing and accessing web page content, as is demonstrated by Bernardo et al.

Referring to claims 2 and 5, the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide, in conjunction with the teachings of Bernardo et al., is used to create web pages which provide online help, as is described above. The provision of such web pages is implemented through a client/server environment via computers. Therefore, it is interpreted that the method taught by the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide and the teachings of Bernardo et al. is implemented with a computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method of claims 1 and 3.

In regard to claim 3, it is interpreted that the table of contents disclosed by the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide presents the plurality of help topics in accordance with a taxonomy structure. Specifically, the topics are classified into sections and subsections (see the section entitled "Planning Your NetHelp System" on pages 4 and 5).

As per claim 4, the HTML code used to implement the online help system, as disclosed by the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide, includes specific tags and is structured such that the help topics presented in the table of contents are associated with and displayed under a specific subsection (see the sections entitled "Coding a Subsection for the Table of Contents" and "Coding a Topic for the Table of Contents" on page 13). The HTML code thus contains data specifying a mapping between each of the plurality of help topics and a corresponding node, i.e.

Art Unit: 2173

subsection, of the taxonomy structure. And as described above, this HTML code may be contained in a database like that disclosed by Bernardo et al.

In reference to claim 6, the HTML code taught by the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide contains data specifying a search keyword associated with each help topic (see the section entitled "How the Index Works" on page 13 and the section entitled "Creating Index Keywords" on page 14). As described above, this HTML code may be contained in a database like that disclosed by Bernardo et al.

Regarding claim 7, the online help system taught by the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide includes an index which is displayed to the user. This index contains a "Look for:" field, which is an interface element that prompts for a selection to perform a keyword search (see the section entitled "How the Index Works," starting on page 13).

As per claim 8, the HTML code taught by the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide contains data specifying a search keyword, i.e. index string, which is associated with each help topic (see the section entitled "How the Index Works" on page 13 and the section entitled "Creating Index Keywords" on page 14). As described above, this HTML code may be contained in a database like that disclosed by Bernardo et al.

In regard to claim 9, the online help system taught by the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide includes an "Index button," which is a user interface element presenting the option to view index strings of the help topics (see the section entitled "How the Index Works" on page 13).

In reference to claim 10, the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide discloses that the help contents of a selected help topic are stored in a file written in a markup language, namely HTML (see the section entitled "Writing or Converting Topics" on page 9).

Art Unit: 2173

As per claims 17, 19, 20, and 22, the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide discloses that all links to help topics employ a "nethelp: URL." (see the section entitled "Creating Links Within Your Help System" starting on page 9) It is therefore interpreted that retrieving the help contents for a selected help topic necessitates obtaining the URL associated with the help topic and obtaining the help contents for the help topic based on the URL. Furthermore, the nethelp URL associated with a help topic identifies a local directory of the computer providing the help contents (see the section entitled "Creating Links Within Your Help System" starting on page 9). And since, as described above, the help system described by the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide is implemented in a client server environment through a network, it is interpreted that this URL for the selected help topic identifies a location accessible to the computer system through a network. Regarding claim 22, the URL associated with a help topic identifies a help topic. Therefore, in a browser application providing the online help system described by the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide, some sort of call to a server must be made identifying a help topic upon the selection of a topic link employing the nethelp URL. In response, the server retrieves the help contents for the help topic identified in the call.

Referring to claims 18 and 22, the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide, in conjunction with the teachings of Bernardo et al., is used to create web pages which provide online help, as described above. The provision of such web pages is implemented through a client/server environment via computers. Therefore, it is interpreted that the method taught by the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide and the teachings of Bernardo et al. is implemented with a computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method of claims 17 and 21.

Art Unit: 2173

Claims 11-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide and the U.S. Patent of Bernardo et al., which are both described above, and also, U.S. Patent No. 5,825,356, which is attributed to Habib et al. As shown above, the combination of the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide and the U.S. Patent of Bernardo et al. teaches a method, like that recited in claim 1, for providing help information. However, the combination does not teach that such help information includes an active component, as is expressed in claim 11. Consequently, the combination also does not teach that the active component pertains to an automated fix, that the active component pertains to a problem/incident escalation to a remote network site, and that the active component is a script, as is recited in claims 12, 13, and 14, respectively.

Like the Nethelp 2.0 Authoring Guide and Bernardo et al., Habib et al. presents a method for providing help information to a user, wherein this help information is organized into various topics and is presented on the user's computer (see column 3, lines 44-51). Habib et al. additionally discloses that the presentation of help information includes displaying a "do-it-all" button, which when selected, causes the computer to execute an active component in order to complete a task regarding a selected help topic (see column 1, lines 57-60). Thus, as recited in claim 11, Habib et al. teaches that the help content of a selected help topic includes an active component, which may be executed when the help content is displayed. And since the computer fixes some problem regarding a program by executing the active component, the active component is considered to pertain to an automated fix, as is expressed in claim 12. Consequently, the active component is also considered to pertain to problem/incident escalation, as expressed in claim 13. Regarding claim 14, the active component expressed by Habib et al.,

Art Unit: 2173

which is executed upon selection of the “do-it-all” button, is comprised of one or more scripts (see column 5, lines 45-52).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide, Bernardo et al., and Habib et al. before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the online help systems taught by the combination of the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide and Bernardo et al. such that they include buttons with similar functionality to the “do-it-all” buttons described above and recited by Habib et al. It would have been advantageous to one of ordinary skill to utilize such a combination because “do-it-all” buttons provide a faster means of fixing a problem than that of manually fixing the problem, as is expressed by Habib et al. (see column 4, lines 15-19).

Claims 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide and the U.S. Patents of Bernardo et al. and Habib et al., which are described above, and also, by the article on “Netscape Object Signing” cited in the Information Disclosure Statement. As shown above, the combination of the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide and the U.S. Patents of Bernardo et al. and Habib et al. teaches a method, like that recited in claim 11, for providing help information which includes an active component, i.e. script. However, the combination does not teach the idea of confirming that the help contents of the selected help topic are trusted before executing the script, as is expressed in claim 15. Consequently, the combination also does not teach the idea of bypassing security detection when executing the script, as is conveyed in claim 16.

Like the U.S. Patent of Bernardo et al. and the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide, Netscape Object Signing concerns the provision of online information, and like the U.S. Patent of Habib et al., Netscape Object Signing relates to the execution of scripts on a computer. Specifically, Object Signing is a security mechanism which allows users to get reliable information about code they download from the Internet. Object Signing is used to identify the entity associated with a script that has been downloaded from the Internet and whether the script has been tampered with (see the paragraph beginning with "When an object is signed..." on page 2). Therefore, like expressed in claim 15, Object Signing is used to confirm that the content provided online is trusted before executing a downloaded active component, i.e. script. And as conveyed in claim 16, once a downloaded script is confirmed to be trusted, security detection is bypassed when executing the script (see the paragraph beginning with "Once a signer has been granted..." on page 3).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide, Bernardo et al., Habib et al., and Netscape Object Signing before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the online help systems taught by the combination of the NetHelp 2.0 Authoring Guide, Bernardo et al., and Habib et al. such that they implement Object Signing when providing help information and scripts to a user at a remote network site. It would have been advantageous to one of ordinary skill to utilize such a combination because Object Signing reduces the potential for malicious or accidental damage to the user's computer system and data (see the section entitled "Why Object Signing" on pages 1 and 2).


Conclusion

The prior art made of record on form PTO-892 and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The applicant is required under 37 C.F.R. §1.111(C) to consider these references fully when responding to this action. The Walden et al. U.S. Patent cited therein discloses a method for accessing online help information, wherein the help information is organized into various topics and presented in a taxonomy structure. The Mandyam et al. and Fischer et al. U.S. Patents cited therein teaches a method for retrieving help information for an application by accessing a database over a network. Lastly, the Spellman et al. U.S. Patent cited therein presents a method for providing help information, including an automated fix, to aid a user regarding a computer problem.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Blaine Basom whose telephone number is (703) 305-7694. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Cabeca can be reached on (703) 308-3116. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 746-7238 for regular communications and (703) 746-7240 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 305-3900.


JOHN CABECA
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100

Application/Control Number: 09/607,374

Page 17

Art Unit: 2173

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